

Subject: Pass the comp plan and rezone this year

From: Mark Scerbo

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To: City Council <CityCouncil@a2gov.org>; Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>

Subject: Pass the comp plan and rezone this year

To City Council:

After well over two years of public engagement, debate, compromise, and hard work, we're almost ready to pass the Comprehensive Plan and start enabling more housing options. Councilmembers, please pass the plan in the next month. When you approve the plan, simultaneously pass a resolution asking Planning Commission to propose new Hub and Transition UDC language within **10 weeks**. The city has very few levers to pull to slow housing cost inflation, and as you have already noted: we are in a housing crisis! **This work cannot wait.**

Some staff have suggested that rezoning will require our usual process of hiring a consultant and multiple years to rewrite the entire UDC. We've already spent close to a million dollars on consultants writing the plan, and a new mayoral candidate has correctly called out our over-reliance on the consultant class. Thankfully, we have our own home-grown urban planning professionals, who have already [drafted a proposal](#) to flexibly enable more housing in the most efficient, and least politically-controversial, places in our city. I'm personally supportive of a single new Mixed Use 1 (MU1) district which uses self-adjusting height limits by measuring distance to buildings (Option 1). If the UDC details feel complicated or if you've largely left the comp plan discussions to CM Disch, I encourage you to read through the summary provided. Mr. Leaf and Professor Levine have a very easy-to-read writing style, and they've offered both plain-english explanations, as well as the [specific ordinance language](#) - already formatted in the style of the UDC! A consultant would charge a premium for that kind of service.

To the Planning Commission:

You've done an incredible job of distilling thousands of opinions into a comprehensive, ambitious, and balanced plan, despite being bombarded by vicious personal attacks. Now the real work begins: please take up the proposed language as a starting point directly. Debate it, change it, or delete parts of it. *Do not wait months or years for staff to draft language for you to debate.* Finally, do not aim for perfection or completeness. Use your experience and urban planning research to make a best first pass at more permissive language in the easiest parts of the city and pass it on to Council. The low-hanging fruit for you are words on paper, but **for residents, these ordinances represent the difference between having a roof overhead and not making rent next month.**

Finally, like many of you, I am disgusted and saddened by the actions of the despot in the White House and by the many politicians who enable him. While his graft, sexual depravity, and self-serving ways were obvious to many of us, a majority of voters ignored those clear defects in the belief that he would address their economic hardship. I truly believe that suburban sprawl and the American fetishization of single-family homes has led to social isolation and profoundly unaffordable housing for a majority of Americans. While it does not justify bigotry, people support any challenger who claims to address the deepening income inequality which has become the norm. Centrist Democrats are much to blame as well. For years, Democrats have looked towards red tape, respectability, and means-tested policy instead of taking bold action. (Dare I mention governance by survey?) Even bipartisan voter disdain for AI datacenters, which promise to significantly increase electricity consumption (and carbon production) with little societal benefit, has not stopped Michigan Democrats from both-sidesing their way to continued DTE re-election donations.

In this moment of national tyranny, don't be afraid to take decisive action to solve the local problems you are empowered to solve. We *will build* an inclusive and welcoming community for all.

Thank you,
Mark Scerbo
Ward 5 resident